OPINIONS OF AN OPTIMIST

By Creswell Maclaughlin

Woman was the last grand scheme of the divine Sculptor, and that is why she is unsurpassed among all the beauties of creation.

Many a rich man would swap his fortune for a good night's rest.

A lazy citizen is in everybody's way.

Bury the past and make each day a starting point toward a higher life.

Every man should be in haste whose journey leads home.

Kindness is the very soul of a gentleman.

If you want to keep your good looks, keep your good nature.

The man who eats mince-pie at midnight must anticipate many novel suggestions during his sleep.

Jealousy knows no sense of justice.

Wind every clock in the world and set them right, and they will all go wrong again.

The man who allows his child to grow up in indolence commits a crime against the race.

When a man is determined to rise in the world, it is better not to stand in his way. If his purpose is right, he will be a dangerous wrestler.

Immortality is a great thing, but the man who takes his pay in immortality loses many a square meal.

You are nearly half defeated when you tell all your plans.

There is nothing like addressing men at the proper time.

An individual who lives for himself alone should live by himself—alone.

Say "Yes" and "No" to a child, and stick to it. This is the beginning of discipline.

WHAT "KEEPING COMPANY" IS

By Robert C. Auld

HOW seldom does one stop to consider how wonderfully, often fearfully, are made the commonest words we use so trippingly on the tongue. Our every-day speech is such a universal commodity and medium that its aëriform content flows forth almost without our giving it a thought as to the real meaning each particle bears; yet it contains all thought. It has borne, generation after generation, in its embrace weal and woe, joy and sorrow, fun and frolic, pity and pathos: indeed, each emphatic syllable is packed with a story of direct human interest, bursting with human nature.

For instance, what really is the import of the phrase "keeping company"—one so familiar in the currency of modern society speech? I opine the real human interest in it is never suspected. Perhaps, upon expressing a desire to a woman friend that you would like to "drop in this evening," she might hurriedly reply: "Oh, I am keeping company this evening"; or: "I shall have company this evening." If a young man of spirit, you might receive such direct rebuff with chagrin. And you would be sure that whoever the "company" was (you likely would have a rough guess too as to his identity—for of course "it" would be of the masculine gender) would receive the best "entertainment" the young woman's home could afford; and such an entertainment might, you are thinking, take the form of a "regular spread," and the table would be loaded or groan under the good things of the pantry. Submitting to your fate, you would feel your eyes grow moist, at least your mouth would water for the things you would miss, wishing you might have secured the place of the much-honored "company" yourself.

"Keeping company," then, is a phrase doing a most practical social service. It means, in so far as the young woman is concerned, as it is generally used in reference to herself, that a certain person is "waiting upon" her or that this certain person is "devoting his attentions to" her; in fact, is "courting" her in the front parlor, the appropriate place where one can "speak for" oneself.

The mission, then, of this full-freighted vehicle, company, has been a brave and hearty one; and it tells a story of its own life that is full of the romance of mateship. It raises blissful pictures of "when we were young together." The whole soul of the mouthful is in the syllable *pan*, which is reduced from the parent word *panis*, which was used in old Rome for bread, and which is still kept alive in France to-day in *pain*. Bread has always been a symbol; but in this instance it tells a story of flesh and blood.

Now how came we to use the word *pan* or *panis* for bread? According to certain knowledge it was taken from the name of the first breadmaker, or he who taught the people of his own race the art of making bread—the great god Pan, whose figure, as illustrated in the books, must be a familiar one.

The young woman who keeps company in the parlor, the self-speaking place, the sacred court indeed of love, we may be assured also keeps a well-filled pantry. Can we now not readily guess what was first found in the pantry? It was the place for keeping bread—bread alone. But with the increased responsibilities of the growing marriageables upon the hands of the match-making mothers, the pantry soon acquired new burdens and became stocked with the many delectables that the ingenuity of "mother's make" could devise: and all for the purpose of furnishing a goodly "spread" for M'liss's beau or "fellow" or "company." But M'liss's fellow was not the only one that benefited; for did not M'liss's incorrigible younger brothers come in for their share, and did they not often plan sieges of the fortress with disastrous results, requiring a liberal, if forcible, partaking of the detestable "blue mass"? For "jam, and all that's nice," which little boys and girls are made of, often took dire revenge.

The pantry of M'liss's household was therefore calculated to supply at short notice all the demands of the company in the parlor as the courting-place.

After our young woman friend had entertained her company right royally, and he had tested by actually tasting the good things her hands were supposed largely to have made, the time came when a final test was called for; that is, when the dutiful admirer was ready to take his fate in his hand and make the assistant housekeeper a full-fledged matron of a home. The process of doing this in old Rome followed the ideas and practices embedded in the word company. The eating of bread together led to another form of the same function in what was called confarreation, the name of the consummation of the ordeal of company in the wedding of the pair matched and now willing to be mated. What confarreation really was is seen in the ceremony it actually represented: an eating together by the bride and bridegroom, before the high priest and witnesses, of a cake made of the meal or flour of far, or spelt, mixed with salt and water.

But keeping company was not entirely restricted to maidens fair. He or she who kept company was, truly enough, a companion, a fellow, a mate, maybe a messmate, or love mate, a partner or fellow in arms. The wife was called the friend and companion of the man, companion here meaning follower, accompanist. In some places the swain wooed his love by muse and song, and when he had won her attention both joined their voices and their heart-strings vibrated in unison—hence we had what was the accompaniment, and the accompanist. But the word company, and companion, had a greater destiny.

The primitive companions in arms of the elders or fathers in war were the infants of their own and other houses. These younglings served their lords, made their home under the same roof for the actual purpose of eating bread at the same table with the champions of whom they were companions in battle, where the companions followed to the death—it being considered a disgrace should anyone of them get away from the field after the fall of his leader. These companions carried their lord's banner with them. This banner was called *pannis*, and some will say that it was from serving under